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Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security*

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the presidential statement dated 26 October 2010 (S/PRST/2010/22), in which the Security Council requested annual reports on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and resolution 2122 (2013), and called for updates on progress, challenges and gaps across all areas of the women and peace and security agenda. While highlighting notable achievements and trends over the past year, the report provides an account of the continued weak delivery on key commitments and draws attention to areas of stagnation or regression. The report shows that significant challenges persist with regard to the meaningful participation of women in conflict resolution. We continue to witness devastating failures to respect international human rights and humanitarian law across conflicts, particularly with regard to grave violations of women's human rights. In many settings, justice, recourse and reparation remain out of reach. Women and girls also remain unable to access essential services and livelihood opportunities, placing them at increased risk and threatening the short- and long-term resilience of communities. These developments, and the increasing threats against women's human rights defenders, fundamentally undermine global efforts to prevent conflict and sustain peace.

2. In 2020, the United Nations, Member States, regional organizations and civil society will mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). The lead-up to this milestone, and the anniversary itself, provide important opportunities to highlight and appraise progress and revise strategies to deliver results ahead of and beyond 2020. Based upon my commitment last year (see S/2017/861) and in preparation for 2020, the present report features a special focus on the meaningful participation and representation of women in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements. Details are provided on trends, good practices and challenges in this area, and recommendations offered to address the continued underrepresentation of women in efforts aimed at resolving conflict. The report then provides updates and progress across indicators for women, peace and security; recommendations of the three 2015 peace and security reviews, including the global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000);[1] and the implementation of resolution 2242 (2015).

* The present report was submitted after final verification with the relevant entities.

[1] Radhika Coomaraswamy, *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325* (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), 2015).

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3. The report is based on data and analysis provided by entities of the United Nations system, including peace operations and country teams; inputs from Member States, regional organizations and civil society; and analysis of other globally recognized data sources.

II. Follow-up to the three peace and security reviews

4. Over the past year, the international community continued to face a world where violence, inequality and injustice prevent peace. More countries were experiencing some form of violent conflict than at any time in the previous 30 years.[2] For the fifth year in a row, wars, violence and persecution drove forced displacement worldwide to a new high: 68.5 million people displaced at the end of 2017.[3]

5. Even in those places where impressive strides towards peace have included correspondingly impressive efforts and investments in gender equality, new and gender-specific spikes in violence have occurred, facilitated by the erosion of governance, security and social support systems, and by the diversion both of finances and of political and media attention. In Colombia, for example, where the 2016 peace agreement and its follow-up provide inspiration through strong language on gender equality and the engagement of women's civil society organizations, threats against and killings of human rights defenders have since increased,[4] as have the number of new armed groups and incidents of femicide. At the same time, frozen and protracted crises and conflicts continue to require our sustained focus and commitment. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, where ongoing and complex humanitarian and peace and security crises continue, aid from the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to promote gender equality was only $8 per capita.[5] The United Nations has also documented more than 800 cases of conflict-related sexual violence in 2017: a 56 per cent increase from 2016 (see S/2018/250).

6. I remain concerned about lack of progress across the most fundamental commitments to peace and security, human rights and gender equality. Sustainable approaches to the challenges highlighted throughout the present report will require our creativity and long-term commitment to move beyond one-off project-based approaches to women, peace and security to achieve system-level and structural changes. As a preface to the report, I highlight four key areas, which I have prioritized and will continue to prioritize.

A. Women, peace and security for prevention and peace

7. My prioritization of prevention includes placing gender equality and the meaningful participation of women at the centre of all efforts to prevent conflict and sustain peace. Research continues to demonstrate a direct relationship between gender equality and resilience to and prevention of conflict (see S/2017/861, para. 1). Not only can violence against women serve as an early warning sign for violence,[6] but it

[2] United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2018), p. 12.

[3] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017* (Geneva, 2018).

[4] In Colombia, as at August 2018, 14 women's human rights defenders had been killed; 3 of the victims were from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community.

[5] OECD Development Assistance Committee, data for 2012–2013.

[6] Thomas Graham Jr. and others, "Putting women in their place", *Baker Center Journal of Applied Public Policy*, vol. I, No. 1 (2007); and United Nations and World Bank, Pathways for Peace, p. 116.

can also indicate likelihood of compliance with broader international legal obligations, with higher levels of violence against women correlated to lower compliance.[7] In addition, countries with low human rights standards, including with regard to gender equality, are more likely to have militarized and violent inter-State disputes.[8]

8. Close to two decades of implementation of the women and peace and security agenda has generated a wealth of policies and programming options that directly contribute to the prevention of conflict and crisis. At this stage, however, these efforts require increased, innovative and sustained political support and financing. They also require implementation of relevant recommendations of the 2015 peace and security reviews. I am confident that, if Member States and the United Nations can rise to the task and truly implement commitments related to women, peace and security, there is an enormous potential for peace.

B. Gender parity in peace and security

9. Representation of women in peace and security efforts is one essential measurement of commitments related to women, peace and security, particularly the representation and meaningful participation of women in peace operations. One year ago, I launched my system-wide gender parity strategy, with a specific emphasis on peace operations. It is in these settings where the representation of women is lowest, the rate of change is slowest and the potential impacts on our effectiveness and credibility remain critical. I am pleased to report progress at the most senior levels.[9] This year, we achieved gender parity in my Senior Management Group[10] and among our Resident Coordinators. These gains have been made while simultaneously challenging perceptions of women's traditional roles. In March 2018, I appointed the first woman to head the Department of Political Affairs and, as at September 2018, women comprised 41 per cent of heads and deputy heads of missions led or co-led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs. At the D-2 level, the number of women increased from 17 to 24 per cent in the past year.

10. I am committed to addressing the limited progress on the appointment of women to mediation-related and good offices functions. I have recently appointed women as my Special Envoy on Myanmar, the United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions and the temporary special consultant on Cyprus. This progress demonstrates that women leaders are available, and that better representation of women can be achieved quickly through genuine commitment and political will.

11. Nevertheless, the reality in our peace operations is that the number of women at all levels has stagnated, and is at risk of decreasing in the coming years through the imminent downsizing of several missions. In the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, as at December 2017, for example, women comprised only 32 per cent of international staff, 38 per cent of United Nations Volunteers, 11 per cent of National Professional Officers and 7 per cent of Local level staff (see A/72/888-S/2018/539, para. 54). In response, the Mission has taken special measures to address barriers faced by national female staff by reducing the prerequisite entry-level years

[7] Valerie Hudson and others, *Sex and World Peace* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2012); and United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace*, p. 116.

[8] Siân Herbert, "Links between gender-based violence and outbreaks of violent conflict" (Birmingham, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, University of Birmingham Governance and Social Development Research Center, 2014).

[9] See www.un.org/gender.

[10] At present, 26 of the 45 members are women.

of experience for the past three years. I welcome such actions. In line with the challenges being faced, I have requested my senior leadership to immediately form a working group on emergency measures for the implementation of the gender parity strategy in peace operations. This is an emergency that affects the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations and requires decisive action. I hope to count on the support of our Member States as we tackle this challenge.

12. Peacekeeping operations and uniformed personnel remain the most visible representatives of the United Nations, working directly with communities each day. While there has been an increase in the number of women deployed as contingent commanders and several missions now have female police and military peacekeeper networks, and military and police gender advisers, overall numbers remain persistently and unacceptably low, with the representation of women among military troops and police officers at 4 and 10 per cent, respectively, as at December 2017. As at July 2018, 3 of 16 (19 per cent) police components[11] were headed by women and there was only one woman military Force Commander.[12] Targeted efforts, such as the course led by United Nations Police for female senior police officers aimed at increasing the participation of female police leadership in United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as well as the training course for female military officers led by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), continue to serve as important mechanisms to improve these figures. I welcome the innovative leadership of the Elsie Initiative of the Government of Canada to accelerate our efforts with regard to the meaningful participation of women in peace operations, including through incentivizing greater numbers of deployments in line with Security Council resolution 2242 (2015). The United Nations looks forward to partnering on this initiative, including through the newly established multi-partner trust fund.

13. An important pipeline for senior positions, as well as impact on the implementation of commitments related to women, peace and security, is the presence of women in national administrations. I call on Member States to provide gender-balanced lists of nominated candidates for senior posts and address barriers to the participation of women in elected and appointed posts at the national level. In April 2018, only 40 out of 193 (22.5 per cent) of permanent representatives of Member States to the United Nations in New York were women. Out of the 15 Security Council seats, three (Poland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America) were filled by female ambassadors.

14. Achieving gender parity also requires efforts that go beyond the numbers to transform professional and institutional cultures of discrimination and gender bias in all its forms, including institutionalized policies and practices and individual conscious and unconscious bias.[13] We must be holistic and act upon evidence[14] to address the most glaring practices of exclusion, along with those practices which quietly undermine women who hold positions at all levels and contribute to conditions conducive to sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, and other abuses of authority. I am confident that, through comprehensive approaches to gender parity, clear directives for all senior leaders and staff to act as champions of gender equality, and the corresponding changes to mainstreaming a gender perspective outlined below, the United Nations will be better positioned to support Member States in achieving its commitments related to women, peace and security, and will transform the entrenched gendered power relations and institutional culture of the Organization.

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[11] African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei and United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus.

[12] United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.

[13] United Nations system-wide strategy on gender parity (2017), pp. 4, 10, 19 and 25.

[14] Ibid., p. 4.

C. Ending sexual exploitation, abuse, and sexual harassment

15. I remain committed to ending all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse within the Organization. An overview of measures taken by the Organization, and data on allegations and investigations, are available in my latest report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1). In 2017, 62 allegations were reported against personnel deployed in 10 peacekeeping missions and one political mission.[15] In addition, 75 allegations were reported by personnel deployed by other United Nations entities, and one reported allegation concerned a personnel member of a non-United Nations international force operating under a Security Council mandate.

16. I, together with my Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, the Victims' Rights Advocate and Member States, will continue to act on multiple levels, by taking all appropriate measures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and uphold victims' rights. To foster a safe and inclusive work environment, I have also made addressing sexual harassment a priority and, together with my senior managers, made a commitment to a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment.[16]

17. I call on Member States to support our efforts to address root causes and risk factors, including action to end cultures of impunity, abuse of power and gender inequality. I also reiterate my call to Member States for prompt deployment of national investigative officers with appropriate expertise to address allegations, ensure that investigations meet international standards, agree to joint investigations with the United Nations, prosecute alleged perpetrators where there is credible evidence and sanction perpetrators in accordance with the gravity of the offence. I further call on Member States to ensure the security, dignity and well-being of victims and to provide them reparations.

D. Mainstreaming a gender perspective in peace and security

18. Analysis undertaken in conflict-affected settings that lacks a gender lens is partial and can result in flawed analysis and planning, which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on the whole of society. Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system is a longstanding commitment of the Organization and requires United Nations entities to ensure that all planned actions include tailored assessments of implications for women and girls. It ensures that women and girls are not only equal beneficiaries of the work of the United Nations, but also equal partners. Gender-responsive analysis requires us to question and unmask unequal power dynamics that underline the realities of the experiences of women and girls and the gender-specific nature of the various forms of discrimination, violence and abuse.

19. Since last year, the United Nations has strengthened its work to provide joined-up analysis of conflict and crisis situations to inform strategic planning instruments, and I have continued to require gender perspectives in discussions of my Executive Committee. During the reporting period, through the leadership of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UN-Women, a joint initiative on gender-responsive conflict analysis in transitioning contexts was piloted. In the three pilot projects undertaken in the first half of 2018 — in Haiti, Liberia and Darfur — all participating United Nations entities operating across the spectrum of peace operations engaged in

[15] For the details of each allegation, see https://conduct.unmissions.org.

[16] Note to correspondents on the recent Chief Executives Board's session (New York, 4 May 2018).

common analysis aimed at identifying planning options and strategic outcomes for transitions, drawdowns and related benchmarks. Initial findings confirm that the Organization's capacity for gender-responsive conflict analysis has been inconsistent and weak. Key lessons learned included, firstly, the need to ensure that priorities related to gender equality and women, peace and security are built into the overall conflict analysis processes and not run as a stand-alone or parallel process and, secondly, that the quality of these processes directly depends on the level of inclusion and engagement of various partners and beneficiaries, including women's organizations and representatives.

20. A recent example of ongoing gender-sensitive conflict analysis by the United Nations, undertaken through the peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic, exposed a wide range of issues related to the human rights and empowerment of women that will impede sustainable peace, including political marginalization as a root cause, risks of homelessness for women whose husbands have left them or were killed during conflict, rejection of claims by widows with regard to the inheritance of land, growing numbers of female-headed households and the importance of women's organizations as mediation actors at the community level.

21. The effective delivery of the Organization's peace and security mandates requires investment in dedicated senior-level technical support and necessary gender expertise across the system. As part of my own commitment, within the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, I entrusted my Senior Adviser on Policy with guiding our efforts related to gender and the women and peace and security agenda. I am concerned by continued cuts and downgrading of already limited gender posts dedicated to providing such expertise and advisory services, including in mission settings and fragile contexts, and would ask my senior leadership to similarly prioritize this type of expertise.

22. To support the Organization's efforts to promote gender equality in peace operations, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs continue to work towards improved availability of gender advisers and experts. This includes gender units at headquarters and field missions, and a gender focal point network of staff across the entities who take on part-time responsibilities related to gender and to women, peace and security. In 2017, the Department of Political Affairs had a total of 25 gender advisers deployed to 12 field missions or offices of special envoys.[17] Of these, four (16 per cent) were at the senior level (P-5 and above), seven were at the P-4 level (28 per cent) and more than half (56 per cent) were at the P-3 level or below.[18] For the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 9 out of 15 peacekeeping missions have gender units, although only four include senior gender advisers as per the recommendation of the 2015 peace and security reviews. Additionally, there are 53 gender advisers and officers in these units. There are also 12 police gender and sexual and gender-based violence advisers, 18 military gender and protection advisers, two United Nations Police specialized teams focusing on sexual and gender-based violence deployed in Haiti and South Sudan, and 21 women's protection advisers deployed in seven mission settings (see S/2018/250, para. 4).

23. Beyond peace operations, various members of United Nations country teams and, particularly, UN-Women, continued to provide dedicated support for the

[17] In the present report, information has been reported only for special political missions with a minimum staff capacity of 10 professional-level staff. Out of 17 missions, three did not have full-time gender advisers in 2017: the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus.

[18] Four staff members at the P-3 level, three at the P-2 level and seven at the P-1 or G level.

implementation of commitments related to women, peace and security. UN-Women maintained a country presence in a total of 82 countries, including 28 conflict and post-conflict countries,[19] and continued to implement a range of peace, security and humanitarian initiatives in 65 countries.

24. Our analyses must also go beyond the drivers of conflict to include the drivers of peace and stability. Inclusive and gender-responsive conflict and peace analysis should play an essential role in identifying existing national and local capacities and roles for inclusive public policy, peacebuilding, development, and peace and security arrangements, and help to create the foundations for stability and durable peace. Building on the pilot initiative, I encourage minimum requirements for the United Nations system to consistently put into practice high-quality, context-specific and inclusive political and conflict analyses that put gender priorities at the centre. I encourage all entities to join this pilot effort and to integrate quality gender analysis into their own efforts in this area as a minimum requirement in all phases of planning and implementation.

III. Women's leadership and meaningful participation in conflict resolution

25. Women remain underrepresented and unrepresented in efforts to negotiate peaceful political resolutions to conflict, including in processes designed to create entry points or mitigate the impact of conflict. Although women continue to play instrumental roles in all efforts to resolve conflict, including humanitarian access agreements, ceasefires and corresponding efforts related to development, their successes often go unrecognized and their work largely does not result in access to subsequent political processes. Between 1990 and 2017, women constituted only 2 per cent of mediators, 8 per cent of negotiators and 5 per cent of witnesses and signatories in all major peace processes.[20] This poor level of representation, progress in women's leadership and meaningful participation in peace processes, along with corresponding challenges in measuring how women contribute their experience and ideas and assert influence amid consistently male-dominated processes, has been consistently raised since the 2015 reviews and the findings of the global study.[21]

26. The present section highlights how the United Nations, Member States, regional organizations and civil society can work together to improve the representation and meaningful participation of women. This entails (a) acknowledging the changing nature of our efforts to resolve conflict and the need for inclusive approaches to conflict resolution and prevention; (b) addressing persistent barriers to the meaningful participation of women, including institutionalized discrimination and gender bias, and lack of recognition for the full human rights of women; (c) remedying inadequate delivery from the United Nations with regard to mainstreaming the human rights of women and gender perspectives across all areas of work; (d) recognizing the expertise of women as mediators; and (e) including gender-sensitive provisions in peace agreements and tangible modalities and mechanisms for the implementation of peace

[19] For the present report, this includes agenda items of which the Security Council is currently seized and which were considered by the Council at a formal meeting during the period from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017, countries with peacekeeping or special political missions in 2017 and countries that received programmatic funds from the Peacebuilding Fund in 2017.

[20] Council on Foreign Relations, "Women's participation in peace processes".

[21] Coomaraswamy, *Preventing Conflict*; and *Thania Paffenholz and others, Making Women Count — Not Just Counting Women: Assessing Women's Inclusion and Influence on Peace Negotiations* (Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and UN-Women, 2016).

agreements that include the meaningful participation of women, including young women,[22] in their design, monitoring and implementation.

27. It is my hope that the present section spurs serious deliberation and actions among relevant stakeholders to directly support civil society and to advance gender equality and the influential participation of women in peace processes and conflict resolution. It is informed by the discussions of an expert group of more than 50 diverse experts and practitioners[23] convened by UN-Women in May 2018. Their deliberations and recommendations were informed by experiences and practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, Yemen and Kosovo.[24]

28. We have reached a point where approaches and strategies focused only on the traditional idea of "the peace table" are insufficient. Peace processes often stall or advance only to the level of mechanisms aimed at conflict management. Today's conflicts are also increasingly regionalized, and often asymmetrical, with some responses emphasizing counter-terrorism operations and processes and lacking emphasis on international human rights and humanitarian law standards (see A/72/495). While ongoing processes aimed at resolving conflict include peace processes, they also include humanitarian access agreements, such as those negotiated in the Syrian Arab Republic; ceasefires, such as those negotiated in Yemen; development plans, such as the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel;[25] and measures occurring in counter-terrorism spaces, such as "screening",[26] prosecution, and rehabilitation and reintegration, as in the Lake Chad Basin. The United Nations and Member States must approach these diverse mechanisms and processes prepared to address the full and distinct scope of enabling and constraining factors related to the meaningful participation of women as described throughout the present section, including by mainstreaming a gender perspective.

29. Women have an equal right to participate in all efforts to prevent and resolve conflict. Beyond this, their meaningful participation has concrete impacts on outcomes. The term "meaningful" in the context of the right of women to participation is intended to challenge superficial efforts to include women without genuinely extending them the opportunity to influence outcomes. In some cases, this has taken the form of parallel processes or advisory bodies that are unable to contribute to main processes and outcomes. To be clear, however, as recently highlighted by Mossarat Qadeem, co-founder of PAIMAN Alumni Trust, in her briefing to the Security Council, the exclusion of women is not about culture; it is about power. The meaningful participation of women is often prevented on this basis.[27]

30. I am concerned, although unsurprised, that the May 2018 expert group meeting identified the following as prime barriers to the participation of women:

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[22] UN-Women, "Young women in peace and security: at the intersection of the YPS and WPS agendas" (New York, 2017).

[23] UN-Women, *Women's Meaningful Participation in Negotiating Peace and the Implementation of Peace Agreements: Report of the Expert Group Meeting*, report of the meeting convened by UN-Women in New York on 16 and 17 May 2018. Available at www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/10/egm-report-womens-meaningful-participation-in-negotiating-peace#view.

[24] References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of resolution 1244 (1999).

[25] United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel: working together for a prosperous and peaceful Sahel (May 2018). Available at https://unowas.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/english_summary_report.pdf.

[26] See Security Council resolution 2396 (2017).

[27] See http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/security-council/watch/part-1-mediation-and-settlement-of-disputes-security-council-8334th-meeting/5828414277001/?term=.

institutionalized gender bias and discrimination, continued and high prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence, lack of economic, social and cultural rights for women, low levels of political participation of women prior to conflict, and the continuing levels of poverty, food insecurity, disparity and deprivation experienced by women and girls.

31. If we are to progress, we must begin with the human rights of women and those systems which prevent their fulfilment. Even if diverse and inclusive representation of women is accepted during negotiation, it may not result in successes with regard to gender equality. In those cases in which gender equality advocates, including women and men, can achieve inclusion and implementation of transformative women's rights and gender equality agendas, such outcomes can often face significant resistance and backlash from parties to conflict, international actors and community members.

32. I would encourage Member States to support an equal footing for women within local, national and regional peace processes. This includes requiring and advocating for processes to include meaningful and influential roles for women's civil society organizations and core, decision-shaping and decision-making roles for women with the same access and at the same level as men; platforms and mechanisms dedicated to addressing the full scope of the human rights of women and girls and gender equality, specifically as it is linked to prevention; and inclusion of gender expertise and gender-responsive analysis from the start. Investment in capacity-building of both women and men, particularly gate-keepers and those in positions of decision-making, in preparatory processes and inclusive process design is essential.

33. It is also critical that we end the frequent practice of bringing women into processes late or, too often, as tokens. I encourage creative and practical steps to eliminate barriers, such as travel expenses and the need for childcare, mobility and translation. This includes through the establishment of rapid-response funding mechanisms, with capacities to approve requests on short notice, thereby empowering women to seize critical opportunities in peace processes and related events. In Myanmar, the women's participation fund established by the United States Agency for International Development with the global development firm DAI is one such example.

34. Women must be part of pre-negotiation processes if they are to influence and inform the entirety of such processes. In addition, improved linkages, information flows and feedback mechanisms are needed between various mediation tracks to ensure that decisions made are inclusive and rooted in realities on the ground. In many processes, the mobilization of women and mediation efforts at the local level have contributed to reigniting talks, prevented escalation of violence and facilitated the provision of assistance to those in need. For instance, in the Central African Republic and Mali, women successfully contributed to negotiating between armed actors to halt the escalation of intercommunal tensions; in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Yemen, women have facilitated ceasefires, humanitarian access and peace talks. In the Syrian Arab Republic, women have successfully negotiated local ceasefires, mediated the creation of civilian safe zones and coordinated humanitarian and relief initiatives. In Yemen, women play a critical and active role in processes for the resolution of tribal disputes, leveraging the strong history of female participation in certain aspects of Yemeni tribal systems.[28] Yet, formal recognition of these efforts and the participation of women in formal peace processes remain limited.[29]

[28] Hanan Tabbara and Garrett Rubin, "Women on the frontlines of conflict resolution and negotiation: community voices from Syria, Iraq and Yemen", discussion paper (New York, UN-Women, 2018).

[29] UN-Women, "Syrian women's peace efforts: crucial yet unrecognized", 5 September 2018. Available at http://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2018/9/syrian-women-peace-efforts.

35. With the strength of the women and peace and security agenda growing, there has been progress in efforts to integrate gender perspectives and promote the meaningful participation and representation of women in the work of the United Nations on conflict prevention, conflict resolution and sustaining peace. The obligations for the Organization to "walk the talk" are high, and, I, in collaboration with Member States, will continue to promote the representation and meaningful participation of women across mediation efforts, including on mediation teams and in leadership positions.

36. In 2017, requests for technical gender expertise were received and such expertise was provided in three out of four mediation processes in which the United Nations was involved as lead or co-lead mediator,[30] and women were included in all United Nations teams supporting mediation efforts. After a drop in 2016, consultations with women's civil society organizations were again ensured in all processes supported during 2017. This included regular consultations between the Special Envoy for Syria and women's civil society leaders through the Syrian Women's Advisory Board and groups in the context of the Civil Society Support Room. It also included consultations with the Technical Committee on Gender Equality in Cyprus and consultations with the Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace and Security in West Africa and the Sahel.

37. In addition, since 2010, the Department of Political Affairs has produced guidance[31] and delivered training to translate commitments on gender and mediation into practical action. Over 200 people from the United Nations Secretariat, regional organizations, Member States and civil society have now participated in the annual United Nations high-level seminar on gender and inclusive mediation processes[32] and over 300 staff from headquarters and special political missions have been trained on the implementation of the Department's commitments related to women, peace and security. All United Nations lead mediators and staff supporting peace processes are strongly encouraged to use strategies and tools to design inclusive and gender-sensitive mediation strategies, to advocate for the meaningful participation of women and the inclusion of gender-sensitive provisions within all thematic areas of peace agreements. The Organization will continue to review the impact of training sessions held and guidance developed to ensure that it is contributing to meaningful change.

38. Peacekeeping missions also supported a range of processes. In the Central African Republic, for instance, the mission worked with women on local peace agreements such as that between the 3R rebel group and the self-defence force in Bambari and Bouar and supported the establishment of mediation cells comprised of 30 per cent women. Such localized efforts continue to build a base for the engagement of women in national peace and reconciliation processes, including the African Initiative led by the African Union. In Darfur, consultations with women were supported to inform inclusive solutions to implementing the Darfur-wide internal dialogue and consultation, which now includes 30 per cent women. In South Sudan, the mission, women in politics, members of the women's caucus and civil society organizations jointly mobilized to discuss the participation of women in peace and political processes on the eve of phase II of the high-level revitalization processes.

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[30] Geneva international discussions and discussions on Cyprus and on the Syrian Arab Republic. The United Nations also provided extensive technical expertise, including on gender, to the South Sudan process led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and to a number of other processes in which the United Nations was not the lead or co-lead.

[31] United Nations, "Guidance on gender and inclusive mediation strategies" (Nairobi, 2017); and "Guidance for mediators: addressing conflict-related sexual violence in ceasefire and peace agreements" (New York, 2012).

[32] In 2017, the seminar was co-organized with the Crisis Management Centre in Finland and the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, Centre on Gender, Peace and Security.

As a result, the group adopted a joint communiqué, which was used as a key reference among the delegates who joined in the High-Level Revitalization Forum in Addis Ababa and included advocacy for an increase in the ratio of women to men in peace and political processes to 50:50. In Kosovo, community dialogues led by women through the Mitrovica women's trust-building initiative have been significant in sustaining peace.

39. Since my previous report, networks of women mediators (see S/2017/861, para. 17) have continued to evolve and connect across regions as a direct response to ongoing blockages of the meaningful participation of women and their influence in all aspects of peace processes. These networks form part of a new movement aimed at enhancing the influence of women throughout the duration of peace processes, from conflict analysis to preventive diplomacy, and to peacemaking and post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation.

40. In March 2018, representatives from several regional networks met in Oslo with other leading mediation actors with the aim of improving coordination and mutual support. Three members of my High-level Advisory Board on Mediation also attended. The meeting emphasized the need for stronger linkages between women-led mediation at the grass-roots and local levels and processes at the national and global levels. It resulted in the creation of a contact group with representatives from each regional network. Individual networks, such as FemWise-Africa, have made progress in operationalization and are actively contributing to regional peacemaking efforts.

41. These networks are linked to growing global recognition of the need to go beyond approaches aimed only at "stopping the guns" towards processes that can help foster positive peace, a concept that includes accountable and inclusive governance, security from physical harm and full enjoyment of other inviolable human rights. Strong, open lines of communication between mediation networks and government institutions, including those involved in peace and security processes, must be built. While such networks serve an important purpose, they should not become a parallel structure for women or entrench marginalization. Nor should they be focused only on the capacity-building of women, but rather on continued joint action and improved capacity of peace and security processes to be inclusive and responsive for all.

Gender-sensitive peace agreements and their implementation

42. Gender-sensitive language in peace agreements is essential for all issues and can set the foundation for gender inclusion during the peacebuilding phase, in political life and representation, and in rehabilitation and development processes. It can also support accountability for gender-based human rights violations, including sexual violence. The inclusion of gender-responsive provisions in peace agreements is still not consistent, however. Data show significant fluctuations over time, along with a continued downward trend since 2015, with only 3 out of 11 agreements signed in 2017 (27 per cent) containing such provisions (see figure I).[33] In addition, only 7 per cent of agreements signed between 2000 and 2016 refer to specific modalities for the implementation of gender provisions.[34] Last year, the process led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development for South Sudan resulted in the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian

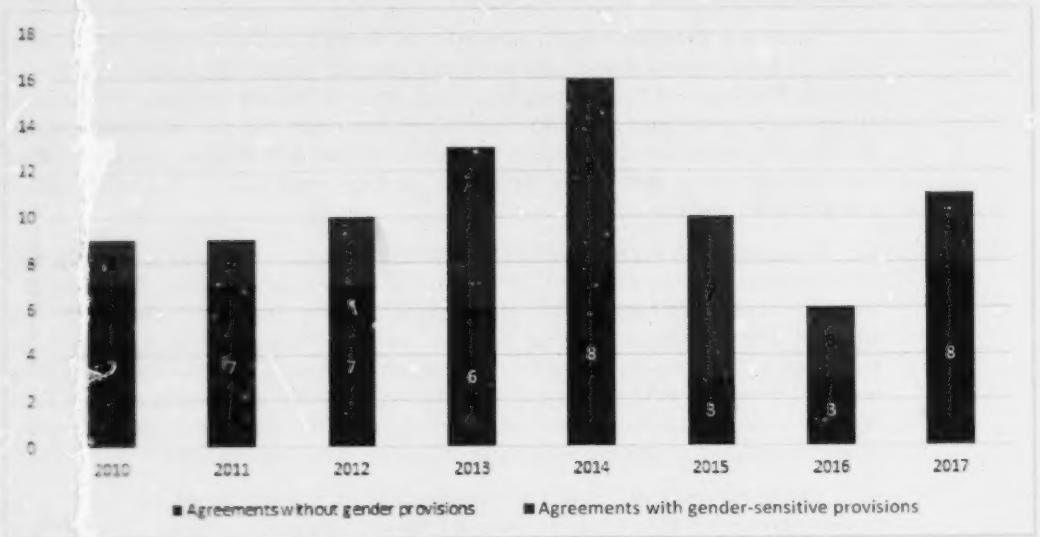
[33] The Department of Political Affairs has tracked the inclusion of gender issues in partial and comprehensive national-level peace agreements since 2010, and figures have been reported to the Security Council in my annual reports on women, peace and security. The Department of Political Affairs defines ceasefire or peace agreements as contracts signed by two parties to a conflict, intending to end or significantly transform violent conflict so that it may be addressed more constructively. Information on peace agreements is available at http://peacemaker.un.org.

[34] Christine Bell and Kevin McNicholl, "Implementation of gender provisions in peace agreements: an overview of the PA-X database" (forthcoming).

Access, which contained provisions linked to the participation, rights and protection of women and girls.

Figure I

Number of peace agreements signed, with and without gender provisions, 2010–2017



43. While the fluctuations in percentages can be explained by the relatively small sample of agreements per year, tracking these trends and the language in agreements provides insight into factors that both enable and constrain such inclusion. For instance, in cases where direct investments were made in an inclusive process, with channels established for the meaningful participation and representation of women and technical gender expertise made available and used, these corresponded to more detailed provisions in agreements across issues covered. Research shows that comprehensive agreements concluded towards the end of a process are more likely to contain strong and substantive gender provisions.[35] Continued tracking and analysis of the components of peace agreements helps expand the repertoire of good practice and approaches to draw on for future agreements in support of inclusive and sustainable peace. The growth in open-source databases is facilitating comparative analysis, contributing to clearer decision-making and practice.[36]

44. The current downward trend in gender provisions, and the varying quality of existing ones, should justify a redoubling of efforts to promote gender-inclusive processes and agreements. This requires, among other things, increased investment, promotion of the direct representation of women in negotiations and striving for gender-balanced mediation teams with members who are well versed in obligations related to gender equality and women, peace and security. It also requires access to technical thematic gender expertise on related issues and the establishment of contributing advisory bodies or gender commissions, along with channels for direct consultations with women's civil society organizations and affected communities.

45. A peace process does not end once a peace deal is signed or a national dialogue process is completed; it is often merely the beginning. This is even more so for women

[35] Katrina Lee-Koo and Jacqui True, "Toward inclusive peace: mapping gender-sensitive peace agreements 2000–2016" (Monash University, April 2018).

[36] UN-Women, *Women's Meaningful Participation in Negotiating Peace and the Implementation of Peace Agreements* (see footnote 23).

and girls, whose experience of elevated levels of violence and insecurity often continues well beyond any formal end of a conflict. To date, little attention has been paid to gendered provisions in monitoring arrangements and modalities for the implementation of peace agreements. Even less attention has been paid to the inclusion and meaningful participation of women.

46. An analysis of 1,500 peace and political agreements adopted between 2000 and 2016 (140 processes) showed that only 25 agreements mentioned the role of the engagement of women in implementation.[37] Evidence continues to demonstrate that the inclusion of such provisions and the participation of women in peace processes directly relates to improved outcomes with regard to gender equality and to implementation of peace agreements, and also results in longer-lasting agreements.[38] In Guinea-Bissau, the Women's Facilitation Group contributed to efforts that prevented the escalation of political tensions. As a direct result of these advocacy efforts, the President of Guinea-Bissau held bilateral talks with the speaker of parliament, the Prime Minister, the President of the Supreme Court of Justice, and the leaders of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde and the Party for Social Renewal (see S/2017/695 and S/2018/771), contributing to the eventual breakthrough in the political impasse in the country in June 2018. I call on Member States and the United Nations system to ensure that the voices and experiences of women are included across processes, including through support and engagement with civil society, and to create an enabling environment for their participation. This includes committing to such collaboration on a consistent basis and taking steps to remove practical and structural barriers to their participation as outlined throughout the present report.

47. I am encouraged by growing research and the documentation of good practice in this area. In Colombia, for instance, through the Barometer Initiative of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, innovative data collection approaches employing "everyday peace indicators" support ongoing monitoring and verification of compliance by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Government of Colombia. Regular briefs are released to hold parties to the conflict accountable to the public and to the international community, and data are collected using a range of sources, including text messages, consultations and interviews. Monitoring of the provisions of peace agreements, coupled with proper funding for such activities, has ensured and can continue to ensure that all provisions, including gender-specific or gender-related provisions, are implemented. Without implementation, the most well-formulated provisions have no power. I encourage Member States to support and fund these efforts, including through the monitoring of the implementation of gender-related provisions in peace agreements; the consideration of temporary special measures,[39] such as gender quotas; and the use of clear methods for the engagement of civil society across implementation mechanisms.

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[37] For a detailed review of the methodology, see Peace Agreement Database project, Definitions. For the purposes of that database, peace agreements are defined as "formal, publicly available documents, produced after discussion with conflict protagonists and mutually agreed to by some or all of them, addressing conflict with a view to ending it".

[38] Coomaraswamy, *Preventing Conflict*, p. 41; for further information see, Jana Krause, Werner Krause and Piia Bränfors, "Women's participation in peace negotiations and the durability of peace", *International Interactions*, vol. 44, No. 6 (2018); and Christine Bell, "Text and context: evaluating peace agreements for their 'gender perspective'" (New York, Political Settlements Research Programme and UN-Women, 2015).

[39] Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures.

IV. Regional and national strategies

48. Member States hold the primary responsibility for advancement of the women and peace and security agenda. As such, the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network has great potential to generate much-needed political support to guide strategic and joint action and solidify results for 2020. It is an essential forum for developing partnerships, sharing good practice, supporting implementation at the national and regional levels, and innovating to promote sustained and predictable funding for women, peace and security. In its second year, the Network, currently chaired by Germany, with Spain and Namibia as members of the leadership troika, and with UN-Women serving as the secretariat, now includes 83 Member States and regional organizations. At the capital-level meeting held in April in Berlin, members offered concrete recommendations on participation and representation, accountability and advocacy and the building of alliances to advance the agenda (see A/72/926-S/2018/669). They also voiced concerns about shrinking spaces for civil society and increasing security risks for defenders of the human rights of women.

49. I note the historic significance of the next annual capital-level meeting to be held in Windhoek in 2019, as Namibia becomes chair of the Focal Points Network. The Windhoek Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations, adopted in May 2000, marked a critical step towards the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) under the Presidency of Namibia of the Council. I call on all members of the Network to use this moment to champion the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in words and deeds at the global, regional and, most importantly, national level. The United Nations stands ready to support these efforts.

50. Since my previous report, eight[40] additional Member States adopted national action plans on women, peace and security, bringing the total number of countries or territories with these plans as at September 2018 to 77.[41] Continued work is needed on the monitoring, reporting, evaluation and budgeting of national strategies and plans. Only 18 action plans had an allocated budget at adoption, yet 51 current plans (66 per cent) have monitoring frameworks with progress indicators. As demonstrated by several Member States, including Jordan and Mali, the use of costing, budgeting and monitoring and evaluation frameworks can be a productive component of planning and accountability. Mali now has, for example, dedicated technical expertise to support the national action plan monitoring and steering committees, which have reportedly increased plan implementation.

51. Efforts by Member States and civil society to localize implementation continued, with new processes initiated in Afghanistan, Nigeria, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Localization initiatives supported by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (see S/2017/861, para. 71) are yielding results. In Nepal and the Philippines, local plans in combination with sustained advocacy from local

[40] Albania, Angola, Cameroon, Guatemala, Jordan, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova and Tunisia.

[41] Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Czechia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Lithuania, Mali, Montenegro, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, State of Palestine and Kosovo.

women's organizations contributed to an increase in the number of women running in local elections. In Uganda, the plans resulted in better response to and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in local districts.

52. National human rights institutions are a critical link in the chain of accountability for violations of the human rights of women and prevention. As at 31 July 2018, of the 39 countries and territories reviewed for the present report,[42] 23 had national human rights institutions accredited with A or B status, and five had an ombudsperson institution. Fourteen of those bodies had specific units, departments or committees dealing with issues relating to the rights of women and gender equality.

53. As at August 2018, 11 regional frameworks on women, peace and security[43] had been adopted, including regional action plans. In May 2018, the African Union adopted a continental results framework for standardized monitoring and reporting on women, peace and security by African Member States. The African Women Leaders Network began establishing national chapters in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to deepen the impact and scope of the Network on the linkages between the meaningful participation of women in politics and peace and security efforts. I encourage regional organizations to strengthen and advance these efforts, including through gender parity strategies and actions to address the meaningful participation of women.

V. Gender equality for just, peaceful and inclusive societies

54. The present section provides updates across intersecting areas related to women, peace and security, including access to education and health services in emergencies, sexual and gender-based violence, economic recovery, disarmament, the prevention and countering of violent extremism and counter-terrorism, governance and rule of law and access to justice.

A. Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action, including guaranteeing access to essential services

55. Women and girls continue to experience significant and distinct barriers in access to education, physical and mental health care and services, including sexual and reproductive and HIV-related services, and maternal care in conflict-affected and humanitarian settings. In 2018, approximately 136 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection, a figure that includes an estimated 5 million pregnant women, young women and girls and 34 million who are of reproductive age.[44] In many of these settings, more girls than boys are denied access to education. The out-of-school rate for girls of primary school age is one-and-a-half times that for boys, including in Côte d'Ivoire, Sri Lanka and Yemen. Nevertheless, only 2.7 per cent of humanitarian funding is devoted to education in emergencies.[45] Barriers to

[42] Council on Foreign Relations, "Women's participation in peace processes".

[43] Southern African Development Community, East African Community, Economic Community of West African States, European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Pacific Islands Forum, African Union, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, League of Arab States and Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

[44] United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "Humanitarian action: 2018 overview" (New York, 2018). Available at www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA_HumanitAction_18_20180124_ONLINE.pdf.

[45] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, "Aid to education is stagnating and not going to countries most in need", policy paper No. 31, May 2017.

access are linked not only to collapsed and lacking health systems and services, economic dependence and experiences of violence during crises, but also to limited power over their own sexual and reproductive lives and gender inequality and discrimination that predates the conflict or crisis. The figures stand in direct opposition to the commitments of Member States to enhance quality of services and leave no one behind, which are specifically tied to progress on Sustainable Development Goals 3, 4, 5 and 16.

56. Data continue to show disturbing health gaps, including maternal mortality rates, which are almost twice as high in conflict and post-conflict countries as they are globally.[46] Of the 830 women and adolescent girls who die every day from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, 507 die in countries that are considered fragile because of conflict or disaster — about three fifths of all maternal deaths worldwide.[47] Early, forced and child marriage has also escalated in a number of conflict and humanitarian settings, often in response to conditions in which families and communities negatively cope with financial burdens or safety issues, or to preserve family honour.[48] In Yemen, child marriage rates rose to 66 per cent of girls marrying under the age of 18 in 2017; in governorates with high numbers of internally displaced persons, 44 per cent of marriages involved girls under the age of 15.[49]

57. During the reporting period, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) provided life-saving emergency sexual reproductive health services to 10.8 million people in 53 countries, using the minimum initial service package[50] for reproductive health. The demands for sexual reproductive health expertise from UNFPA have increased despite a shortage in funds ($90 million in 2017), which cover only 20 per cent of current needs. In addition, in 2017 UNFPA provided sexual and reproductive health services to 1.5 million adolescents in 36 countries in humanitarian contexts and trained 20,815 youth facilitators, peers and volunteers in sexual and reproductive health issues and in addressing gender-based violence in 47 countries.[51]

58. I reiterate previous recommendations on the delivery of child- and adolescent-friendly, non-discriminatory holistic health-care and other services, including sexual and reproductive health care, particularly access to safe services for the termination of pregnancies and mental health and psychosocial support, which should be delivered in accordance with international human rights law. I continue to acknowledge the leadership of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom in prioritizing sexual and reproductive health and rights in humanitarian crises and call on other Member States to contribute to these efforts.

B. Sexual and gender-based violence: a principal obstacle to inclusive and durable peace

59. As highlighted in section II, evidence continues to link gender inequality and gender-based violence to a society's greater vulnerability to civil war and inter-State

[46] According to data provided by the World Health Organization, the global maternal morality ratio stood at 216 maternal deaths per 100,00 live births in 2015. In conflict and post-conflict countries, the maternal mortality ratio is 1.6 times the global ratio.

[47] *State of World Population 2015: Shelter from the Storm* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.15.III.H.1), foreword.

[48] See S/2018/250; see also Girls Not Brides, "Child marriage in humanitarian settings", thematic brief, August 2018. Available at www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Child-marriage-in-humanitarian-settings.pdf.

[49] Data provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

[50] Available at http://iawg.net/minimum-initial-service-package.

[51] UNFPA, "Humanitarian action: 2018 overview".

war, and more severe forms of violence in conflict.[52] In addition, research has found a significant relationship between political violence and intimate partner violence in the aftermath of conflict.[53] We must begin to pay greater attention to the continuum of violence against women, including young women, and girls and the full scope of gender-related targeting and harms in conflict, including against women and girls with disabilities, as well as gender-based violence against men and boys. This includes assessing and addressing violent masculinities and the gender-specific impacts of harms, such as battle deaths, torture, arbitrary detention, disappearances and extrajudicial killings.

60. In my latest report on conflict-related sexual violence, I brought to the Council's attention 19 situations of concern and an updated list of 47 parties to conflict that were credibly suspected of having committed or instigated patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations of conflict. The report highlights that the preponderance of victims were politically and economically marginalized women and girls (see S/2018/250, para. 11) and that the emerging trends of concern included, for example, use of sexual violence by parties to conflict to attack and alter the collective identity of persecuted groups and control land and resources. Patterns identified in previous reports, including trafficking,[54] continue to prevail and crimes continue to be committed with impunity. In several settings, survivors still await justice for crimes committed over a decade ago, and stigma continues to have gender-specific impacts on survivors, as well as children conceived through rape. I call on all relevant stakeholders to implement the country-specific and overarching recommendations put forward in the report.

61. Women's human rights defenders; women political leaders, journalists, justice actors and security sector personnel; young women activists; and civil society leaders continue to be targeted at alarming rates, often for challenging the root causes of conflict, such as corruption, governance deficits, access to land or resources and traditional notions of family and gender roles in their societies. This includes those who are or are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex, or those who advocate for their rights. As a sobering reminder, more than half of the women honoured in the annual tribute of the Association for Women in Development for 2017 had been murdered because of their work in conflict-affected countries, including Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.[55] I continue to call for dedicated protection mechanisms informed by those under threat, including women who face intersecting discrimination based on race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity, economic status and other factors.

62. Efforts by UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund and others to institutionalize interventions initiated in an emergency are encouraging. In Ukraine, for example, shelter services and safe spaces for women, initiated as part of the humanitarian response, are now being transformed into a larger crisis centre which is to be handed over to and managed by the local government, reflecting a new

[52] United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace*.

[53] See, for example, Monica McWilliams and Jessica Doyle, "Violent conflict, political settlement and intimate partner violence: lessons from Northern Ireland" (Edinburgh, United Kingdom, Political Settlements Research Programme, 2017); and Jocelyn Kelly, "Intimate partner violence and conflict: understanding the links between political violence and personal violence", cited as a background paper for United Nations and World Bank, *Pathways for Peace*.

[54] *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IV.6).

[55] Nana Darkoa Sekyiamah, Lejla Medanhodzic and Liz Ford, "Remembering women killed fighting for human rights in 2017", *The Guardian*, 29 November 2017; and Association for Women's Rights in Development, "Remembering: a tribute to women's human rights defenders who are no longer with us".

continuum approach to programming. In addition, the establishment of one-stop centres offering holistic assistance packages for survivors has continued to prove effective in conflict-affected areas, including in Mali and the State of Palestine. I recognize efforts by all actors forming part of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies to strengthen accountability, collective action and locally driven programming, as well as the leadership of UNFPA in its coordination of the global-level gender-based violence area of responsibility. I encourage all relevant entities to continue working with Member States to further strengthen prevention of gender-based violence, risk mitigation and response.

C. Economic recovery and access for women to resources

63. For women, lack of access to assets and productive resources renders them vulnerable to poverty and violence and prevents them from realizing their rights, including their rights to health, education, employment and participation in conflict recovery and peacebuilding efforts. Addressing issues relating to economic empowerment during conflict and post-conflict phases is a prevention strategy, because disputes over access to economic resources is one of the most prevalent drivers of conflict. In conflict-affected and non-conflict countries, women's rights to and the level of access for women to land ownership is extremely low, due to customary and statutory law, with women accounting for only 11.5 per cent of landholders in conflict-affected countries and 13.4 per cent in non-conflict countries.[56] Women are also less likely than men to be engaged in paid employment.

64. Gender inequality in access for women to resources and the marginalization of women, young women and girls is not simply caused by the presence of conflict and unrest, but, as noted in my previous report on the subject, is also a reflection of the prioritization of large-scale investment in post-conflict economies on infrastructure, extractive industries and commercial agriculture and the relegation of women to small-scale and local initiatives (S/2016/861, para. 50). The average percentage of monetary equivalent benefits received by women and girls through early recovery programmes has dropped to 38 per cent,[57] notwithstanding the increase by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) of the monetary benefits received by women and girls from temporary employment in the context of such programmes in 13 countries[58] to an estimated $183 million in 2017, an increase of 144 per cent from the previous year. Such programmes are essential, given the high correlation between access for women to livelihoods and overall household and community welfare.[59] I encourage other United Nations entities to adopt that indicator in order to expand the evidence base and better assess the evolution of gender disparities in access to resources, including with regard to natural resources, climate change and peace, as recently undertaken by UN-Women, the United Nations Environment Programme, UNDP and the Peacebuilding Support Office.

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[56] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), "Gender and land statistics", Gender and Land Rights database. Available at www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/data-map/statistics/en. Conflict aggregate based on 15 countries with available data. Non-conflict aggregate based on 89 countries.

[57] Compared with 47 per cent in 2016, 46 per cent in 2015 and 38 per cent in 2014. The 9 per cent decrease in 2017 compared with the previous year is explained by the increased weight of the programme in Yemen, which is now ten times what it was before and where the indicator reaches 30 per cent, a relatively good performance for that country. When Yemen is excluded from the dataset, the indicator reached 50 per cent.

[58] Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Jordan, Mali, Mauritania, Pakistan, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, Ukraine and Yemen.

[59] UN-Women, "Women working for recovery: the impact of female employment on family and community welfare after conflict" (New York, 2012).

65. Women's right to equal participation in the economy and the rights that create the preconditions for such equal participation, including to land ownership, inheritance and work, must be prioritized. It is critical for Member States to integrate a gender perspective into development and financing frameworks and actions, in accordance with the commitments made in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the women and peace and security agenda. To do so, building and strengthening capacity to understand and analyse the intersecting political, social and economic factors conducive to inequality and conflict will be essential. Many of the challenges that I highlighted in my previous report, including in relation to the political economy, remain unaddressed.

66. Having set out above the next steps for increasing the meaningful participation of women, I recognize the need for an enhanced focus on economic recovery and access for women to resources for prevention and sustaining peace, in particular in conflict and post-conflict settings. I encourage United Nations entities and Members States to take innovative, gender-sensitive approaches, with a view to accelerating progress in the economic empowerment of women in peacebuilding and conflict-recovery contexts by identifying which investments are taking precedence over women's economic recovery and reinvesting in larger scale efforts in that regard. In economic terms, transparency in budgeting, financial flows and allocation are essential to ensuring that Member States, regional organizations and the United Nations have the tools required to reallocate and reinvest in economic recovery and access to resources for women. It is not only the gender-blindness in these areas and metrics that impel us to do better and more, but the daily violence women experience through deprivation and disparity and violations of their social, economic and cultural rights. In addition, failure to invest in the economic empowerment of women is a failure to invest in peace amid the growing evidence linking the empowerment of women to conflict prevention and resilience.

D. Promotion of the participation of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control

67. Disarmament and arms control play a key role in preventing and ending violent conflict, yet the world is moving towards increased militarization, the continued spread of small arms and growing inter-State tensions. In response to those negative global trends, in May I launched a new agenda for disarmament, as set out in the document *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, which addresses weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons and emerging means and methods of warfare,[60] aimed at fully aligning with the core purpose of the women and peace and security agenda, including through the meaningful participation of women.

68. Today, there are an estimated 857 million small arms in civilian possession,[61] and they are often involved in various forms of violence, such as in the context of forced displacement and sexual and gender-based violence, including killings of women by male intimate partners. At the third United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects,

[60] *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.18.IX.6).

[61] Out of some 1,013 million small arms in the world, almost 85 per cent are in civilian hands — the majority unlicensed. See Aaron Karp, "Estimated global civilian-held firearms numbers", Small Arms Survey Briefing Paper, June 2018. Available at www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Civilian-Firearms-Numbers.pdf; see also www.smallarmssurvey.org/weapons-and-markets/stockpiles/civilian-inventories.html.

countries reaffirmed their commitment to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. For the 2016–2017 reporting period, of the 77 countries that submitted their national reports, 33 reported that a gender perspective had been incorporated into policymaking, planning and the implementation of the Programme of Action, and 11 reported that that they collect data disaggregated by sex, which enable a better understanding of the gender dynamics of weapons collection, ownership and related impacts.[62] I welcome such efforts and urge more countries to build capacity for such analysis and data collection.

69. Despite women's historic roles in movements calling for disarmament, they remain significantly underrepresented across disarmament efforts. In 2017, only one quarter of the participants in multilateral disarmament meetings at the United Nations were women. In the outcome document of the third Review Conference on the Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/2018/RC/3, annex), States encouraged the full participation, representation and leadership of women in policymaking, planning and implementation related to the Programme of Action, such as national small arms commissions and programmes relating to community safety, violence reduction, the collection and destruction of small arms and light weapons, and conflict prevention and resolution.

70. Data from disarmament initiatives implemented by the United Nations in field missions also show mixed progress in this regard. In 2017, women represented only 7 and 12 per cent of the total caseload demobilized with support of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic and the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), respectively. Although women on average constitute a small percentage of demobilized combatants, their participation as direct beneficiaries in community-based projects, such as community violence reduction continues to grow. In projects implemented by five peacekeeping missions in 2017, the participation of women ranged from 25 to 52 per cent. Projects targeting women directly sought to support women's organizations, address education gaps, promote the development of vocational skills and provide livelihood support.

E. Preventing and countering violent extremism and countering terrorism

71. Violence perpetrated by designated terrorist and violent extremist groups listed on Security Council sanctions lists continues to have a devastating impact, and includes indiscriminate violence against civilian populations and the targeting of civilian objects, discrimination against women and girls as an organizing force and the strategic manipulation of gender norms and stereotypes (see S/2017/861). Many groups, including Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Boko Haram, use the promise of marriage and access to sex to incentivize recruitment of men and boys, engage in trafficking and other gendered practices that promote and reinforce violent masculinities, and perpetuate sexual and gender-based violence and the persecution of individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation[63] or gender identity (S/2018/250, para. 13). Other terrorist and violent extremist groups also continue to demonstrate foundational ideologies and cultures of violent misogyny.

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[62] National reports are available at http://smallarms.un-arm.org/national-reports/.

[63] Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, conference room paper on human rights abuses and international humanitarian law violations in the Syrian Arab Republic, 21 July 2016–28 February 2017, para. 110. Available from www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/regularsessions/session34/pages/listreports.aspx.

72. Gender-sensitive approaches to addressing terrorism and violent extremism require the respect, protection and promotion of the human rights of women and girls, the mainstreaming of gender analysis and investment in research aimed at understanding the gender-specific dynamics and impacts of violent extremism and terrorism. It also requires the representation and meaningful participation of women and women's civil society organizations in the design and implementation of measures aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism and countering terrorism.[64] Related counter-measures, including comprehensive and tailored prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, as well as all security policies and strategies, including disarmament and demobilization, must also be gender-sensitive. Increasing the availability of data disaggregated by sex and age and substantive research on the perspectives of women on and their experience with designated terrorist or violent extremist groups will continue to guide success in that regard.[65]

73. The violations experienced by women and girls in contexts affected by terrorism and violent extremism are broad and compounded, with personal violence often resulting in social stigma, economic hardship and discrimination.[66] I encourage Member States and entities to tailor responses to reflect those experiences and am encouraged by efforts in that regard.

74. Counter-terrorism and national security policies carry gender-specific impacts, including on women's and youth organizations and on women suspected or convicted of association with nationally listed groups. It is the obligation of Member States, as well as the Security Council and the whole of the United Nations system, to ensure that efforts to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism respond to the full scope of commitments in the context of the women and peace and security agenda and are inclusive, coordinated, human rights-based and gender-sensitive.[67] I am increasingly concerned about the expanding scope of rehabilitation with limited oversight of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes and violations of human rights, including the misuse of states of emergency (A/HRC/37/52, para. 72). I am encouraged by efforts by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to identify and respond to the gender dimensions of criminal justice responses to terrorism.

75. I encourage all Member States to stand firm in their commitments to international law in all their efforts, as reflected in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and Security Council resolutions. I encourage UNODC, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, OHCHR, UN-Women and other relevant entities to continue working with Member States to mainstream gender analysis as a core component of their efforts. I encourage Member States to review national counter-terrorism policies for gender-specific impacts, taking note of the existing examples of good practices.

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[64] Coomaraswamy, *Preventing Conflict*. See also, Fionnuala Ní Aoláin and Jayne Huckerby, "Gendering Counterterrorism: How to, and How Not to — Part II", Just Security, 3 May 2018. Available at www.justsecurity.org/55670/gendering-counterterrorism-to-part-ii/.

[65] S/2017/861, paras. 44–45.Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and UN-Women, summary report of its Research Symposium, held in New York, on 18 July 2018. Available at www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Summary-report_final.pdf.

[66] Joanne Neenan, *Closing the Protection Gap for Children Born of War*, The London School of Economics and Political Science Centre for Women, Peace and Security, June 2018. Available at www.lse.ac.uk/women-peace-security/assets/documents/2018/LSE-WPS-Children-Born-of-War.pdf.

[67] Arun Kundnani and Ben Hayes, "The globalisation of countering violent extremism policies: undermining human rights, instrumentalising civil society", Transnational Institute, February 2018. Available at www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/the_globalisation_of_countering_violent_extremism_policies.pdf.

76. With a view to increasing the representation and meaningful participation of women in counter-terrorism efforts, I am pleased to report the appointment in 2017 of the first woman to hold the mandate of Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. As counter-terrorism has been a historically male-dominated field, I am committed to paying special attention to gender parity in that area. Earlier in 2018, the Office of Counter Terrorism committed to improving gender parity strategies across all staffing levels. I urge Member States to also consider gender parity strategies in this field at the national and regional levels.[68]

77. The meaningful participation of women includes the participation of women and women's civil society organizations in shaping security priorities and efforts and addressing root causes (Security Council resolution 2396 (2017), para. 39). I am concerned, however, by recent research data that shows that 90 per cent of grass-roots women's organizations working in areas directly impacted by terrorism and violent extremism reported that counter-terrorism measures had an adverse impact on work for peace, women's rights and gender equality, in generally.[69] That indicates the clear need for improved consultation and support to allow for women's organizations to influence and control further programming in this area, including through financing.

78. I urge Member States and United Nations entities tasked with implementation of Security Council resolution 2242 (2015) and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to prioritize upstream prevention and meaningful engagement with women's civil society organizations. I recognize and welcome the continued support by Member States, such as Australia, Japan, Jordan, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom, for their research and programming, including with civil society actors, such as Hedayah, the election monitoring programme of the Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development, and the WO=MEN Dutch Gender Platform.

79. The partnership between UN-Women and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate resulted in the first joint briefing[70] to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, the inclusion of the gender expertise from experts at UN-Women in all assessment missions conducted in 2017 and increased collaboration on new gender-sensitive research. I welcome the continued partnerships between UN-Women, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Office of Counter-Terrorism in advance of the global strategy review in 2020 and look forward to the expansion of partnerships between UN-Women and UNODC and other United Nations entities working in this area. I encourage the Office of Counter-Terrorism to continue integrating a gender perspective into its work, including by advancing mechanisms for consistent and meaningful dialogue with women's civil society organizations.

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[68] As at 14 August 2018, women accounted for 53 per cent of Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate staff overall; see www.un.org/gender/content/united-nations-secretariat-data. As at August 2018, the Office of Counter-Terrorism had only achieved gender parity at the P-4 and P-3 levels, with women comprising only 39 per cent of its staff.

[69] Duke Law International Human Rights Clinic and Women Peacemakers Program, *Tightening the Purse Strings: What Countering Terrorism Financing Costs Gender Equality and Security*, March 2017. Available at https://law.duke.edu/sites/default/files/humanrights/tighteningpursestrings.pdf.

[70] United Nations, "UN-Women and CTED jointly brief Security Council Committee on gender dimension in counter-terrorism efforts", 31 March 2017. Available at www.un.org/sc/ctc/news/2017/03/31/un-women-cted-jointly-brief-security-council-committee-gender-dimension-counter-terrorism-efforts/.

F. Governance and political participation of women

80. Little progress has been made since my previous report in increasing the political representation of women in conflict and post-conflict countries. As at July 2018, only 17 countries had elected a woman to the position of Head of State or Government, none of which were post-conflict countries. The global proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by women stood at 23.8 per cent in June 2018.[71] For conflict and post-conflict countries,[72] available data continue to show lower numbers of women parliamentarians than the global average, with a stagnating average of around 16 per cent. In a worrying trend, the proportion of women in parliament has decreased in several conflict and post-conflict countries. In Lebanon, although the representation of women in parliament increased from 3.1 to 4.69 per cent when an additional two women were elected to parliament, overall representation remains lower than average for conflict and post-conflict countries.[73] Data on the use of quotas for candidate lists or for elected representatives, a form of temporary special measure, continue to demonstrate their positive impact on increasing the representation of women. As at June 2018, women in conflict and post-conflict countries with legislated quotas occupied 19.82 per cent of parliamentary seats, compared with 12.1 per cent in countries without such quotas.

81. The barriers to the full and effective participation and leadership of women in decision-making in political, economic and public life are well known. Increased and improved efforts are therefore required to ensure that the participation of women is supported and that Member States implement temporary special measures to fulfil their commitments under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, taking into consideration general recommendation No. 25 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and Sustainable Development Goal 5. Improved data and related reporting across all areas of political participation is also needed. I am encouraged by the methodological advances in data collection and analysis for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.5.1 (b) on the proportion of seats held by women in local government and welcome efforts by countries such as Uganda, which is already collecting such data.[74] I hope such examples will inspire improved statistical and analytical capacity across related areas, such as data and analysis on the registration of women to stand for election and voter turnout.

82. I welcome the increased attention to combating violence against women in politics,[75] which is integrally linked to the advancement of the women and peace and security agenda. In conflict and post-conflict settings, threats and protection challenges surrounding the political participation of women are often heightened, preventing women from participating in political transitions and the consolidation of peace.

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[71] Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in National Parliaments database, data as at 1 June 2018. Available at http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/world010618.htm.

[72] Countries with peacekeeping or special political missions in 2017 and countries that received programmatic funds from the Peacebuilding Fund in 2017.

[73] Inter-Parliamentary Union, PARLINE database on national parliaments. Available at http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/parlinesearch.asp.

[74] UN-Women, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2018), box 3.2, p. 97.

[75] A/73/301; United Nations Development Programme and UN-Women, Preventing Violence against Women in Elections: A Programming Guide (2017).

G. Rule of law and access by women to justice and security

83. Discriminatory laws and practices prevent women, young women and girls from enjoying full and equal protection under the law and achieving just outcomes for violations of their human rights. I reiterate that improving access for women and girls to justice is central to the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 5, 10 and 16. Structural inequalities, poverty and discrimination in both conflict and non-conflict contexts reduce opportunities for women, young women and girls to be informed of their rights and hinder their access to justice before, during and after conflict.

84. Women also remain unevenly represented in transitional justice and rule of law institutions. As at 1 July 2018, women comprised 30 per cent of commissioners on United Nations-supported truth commissions. In Colombia, 5 of the 11 commissioners (45.5 per cent) were women; in the Gambia, 4 of 11 (36.4 per cent) were women; in Tunisia, 4 of 9 (44.4 per cent); and in Mali, 5 of 25 (20 per cent). Of the magistrates in the Special Criminal Court in the Central African Republic, only 3 of 11 (27.3 per cent) were women. I welcome the appointments by the Government of Colombia of women to senior transitional justice positions, including Director of the Unit for the Search for Persons deemed as missing and President of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, in which women also comprise 54.9 per cent of the judicial panel. In the Gambia, efforts by the Government, civil society and the United Nations have already resulted in the establishment of a civil society coordination mechanism and plans for gender mainstreaming in the transitional justice process.

85. Member States have repeatedly made commitments to increase their use of human rights monitoring and reporting mechanisms, including the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council, to address accountability for violations of the human rights of women and girls, including in conflict and post-conflict settings (S/2017/861, para. 72). In 2017, special procedures of the Human Rights Council sent a total of 497 communications, of which 36 related to women's human rights and violations thereof, pertaining to 21 conflict and post-conflict countries.[72] The authors of the communications raised allegations of killing, enslavement, trafficking, sexual violence, forced labour, displacement, harassment and threats against women human rights defenders and judges, discrimination in land ownership, denial of food, access to healthcare, safe drinking water and sanitation, politically motivated prosecutions, and abductions of women and girls for sexual exploitation.

86. As at 31 July 2018, the Human Rights Council had also received reports on independent human rights investigations in Burundi (A/HRC/36/54), the Kasaï region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/HRC/38/31), Myanmar (A/HRC/39/64), South Sudan (A/HRC/37/71), the Syrian Arab Republic (A/HRC/37/72) and Yemen (A/HRC/39/43). The reports documented grave violations of the human rights of women and girls and endemic sexual and gender-based violence, including sexualized torture in Burundi (see A/HRC/36/54), gang rape in front of family members in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (see A/HRC/38/31) and rape and mutilations of sexual organs in South Sudan (see A/HRC/37/71). The independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar, established by the Human Rights Council, found that sexual violence was a "hallmark" of the Tatmadaw deliberate strategy to intimidate, terrorize or punish a civilian population and that such violence should be investigated and prosecuted as part of an alleged genocide (see A/HRC/39/64). The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic released its first thematic paper on sexual and gender-based crimes, containing harrowing accounts of sexual violence at checkpoints, in place of detention, on the street and inside homes throughout the Syrian Arab Republic, with a majority of documented cases

attributable to Syrian government forces and associated militias. Dedicated gender expertise is essential to documenting the full range of human rights violations and professionally and ethically gathering evidence that can be used to hold perpetrators of sexual and gender-based crimes to account. UN-Women, Justice Rapid Response and OHCHR worked in close partnership on all Human Rights Council mandated missions in 2017 and 2018, including through the deployment of gender advisors and sexual violence investigators.

87. In 2017, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women continued to engage States regarding the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, its general recommendation No. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (CEDAW/C/GC/30) and its general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19 (CEDAW/C/GC/35). In 2017, the Committee examined the periodic reports of 28 States parties to the Convention and addressed issues related to peace and security in the concluding observations of 18 of those States parties; 6 of those 18 States are considered in the present report.[76] The Committee's concluding observations for 11 non-conflict countries contained references to the women and peace and security agenda.[77]

88. Transitional justice mechanisms and rule of law institutions in transitional and conflict-affected contexts are essential tools for ensuring that the perpetrators of violations and discrimination against women, young women and girls are held to account, the crimes addressed and the contexts thereby transformed. They include holistic, survivor-focused and community-led initiatives, which are main contributors in enhancing access to justice. I remain encouraged by collaborations between Member States, United Nations entities and civil society organizations to enhance access for women to transitional justice and advance survivor-centred processes. For example, in 2018 in Kosovo, the government established a commission to provide reparations to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, working in close partnership with victims' associations; the commission is the result of years of civil society activism and the support of an innovative partnership between UN-Women and the European Union to advance gender-sensitive transitional justice (see S/2017/861).

89. Justice is a fundamental aspect of peace and reconciliation. Sexual and gender-based crimes and other serious violations of international criminal law must be investigated and prosecuted. I welcome the appointment of the Special Adviser of the Investigative Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2379 (2017) and the continued work of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 (see General Assembly resolution 71/248) to advance the effective investigation of sexual and gender-based crimes (see A/72/764), in accordance with international standards, including through overall integrating a gender perspective and dedicated gender expertise.

90. The global focal point for the police, justice and corrections areas in the rule of law in post-conflict and other crisis situations arrangement led by the Department of

[76] Burkina Faso (CEDAW/C/BFA/CO/7), El Salvador (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9), Guatemala (CEDAW/C/GTM/CO/8-9), the Niger (CEDAW/C/NER/CO/3-4), Sri Lanka (CEDAW/C/LKC/CO/8) and Ukraine (CEDAW/C/UKR/CO/8).

[77] In addition, in July 2018, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict signed a framework of cooperation with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to address the structural and root causes of conflict-related sexual violence.

Peacekeeping Operations and UNDP, and in partnership with OHCHR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UN-Women and UNODC, continued to make progress on interventions on access for women to justice and protection from sexual and gender-based violence and (see S/2017/861). In Haiti, the arrangement supported the transition process, so as to ensure the robust inclusion of gender commitments with a view to strengthening access for women to justice and the political participation and leadership of women within justice and security institutions, reinforcing women's security and supporting the establishment of gender-sensitive national legislation, planning and accountability frameworks. An independent review of the arrangement is an opportunity for the global focal point for police, justice and corrections to scale up rule of law assistance.

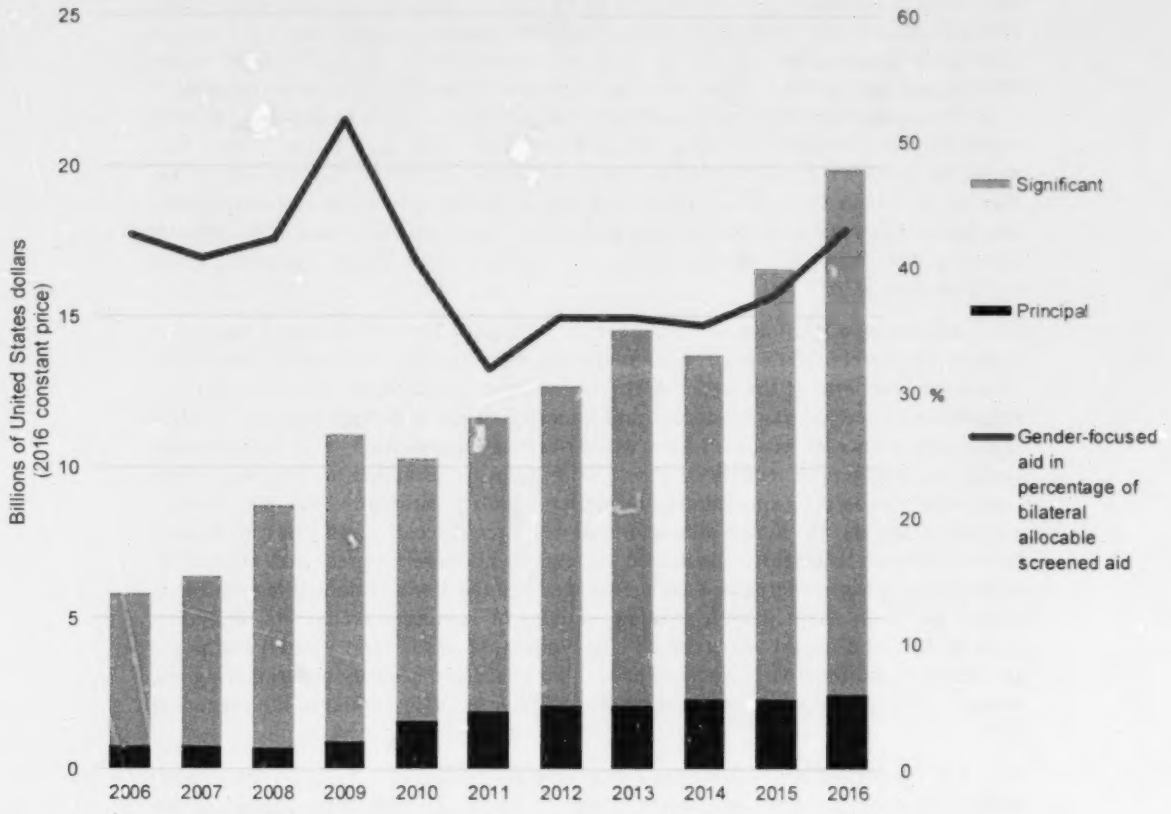
VI. Financing the women and peace and security agenda

91. Essential services for women and girls in conflict-affected countries are chronically underfunded, as are initiatives that promote gender equality and the participation and leadership of women in peace and security areas. Although overall bilateral aid[78] to promote gender equality in fragile country situations is on the rise, dedicated support for programmes prioritizing gender equality remains low. In the period 2015–2016, an average of $18.5 billion per year was received to support programmes to enhance gender equality and the empowerment of women in fragile and conflict-affected countries, an increase of 17 per cent from the previous year.[79] However, total bilateral aid allocated to programmes with the primary objective of targeting gender equality and the empowerment of women in conflict-affected countries remains low, at 5 per cent of total bilateral aid to such countries.

[78] "Aid" refers to sector-allocable official development assistance committed by members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Committee has 30 members as at July 2018.

[79] See www.oecd.org/dac/stats/gender-related-aid-data.htm.

Figure II
Bilateral allocable aid targeting gender equality in fragile and conflict affected countries (or territories), 2006–2016



92. Of the dedicated aid, major donors, including Canada, institutions of the European Union, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and Sweden, contributed over 80 per cent. Notably, Sweden and the Netherlands each committed more than 20 per cent of aid for programmes targeting gender equality and the empowerment of women as a primary objective.[80] In a new initiative, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates launched the "100 per cent women policy", which aims at ensuring that, by 2021, 100 per cent of bilateral and multilateral foreign assistance will target or integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women as key components of their programming.

93. Commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls must be an essential component of national, regional and global strategies for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Preliminary estimates based on eight aggregate sectors suggest that just meeting the commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will require investments ranging from $2 to $3 trillion per year. Conflict-affected countries will require even greater financial support to realize

[80] OECD, "Creditor Reporting System", OECD.Stat database. Available at https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=crs1.

the Goals. I take note of and recognize the long-standing calls by women civil society organizations to reprioritize and make better use of available funds.[81]

94. Contrary to the slow increase in gender-focused aid, global military spending has reached a staggering $1.74 trillion in 2017, a 57 per cent increase since 2000. Whereas most countries worldwide limit military spending to less than 2 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP), some now spend over 3 per cent of GDP on the military and others now allocate more public money to the military than to education.[82] Other financial outflows cripple countries' budgets and limit public spending, thereby weakening the overall resilience of societies. The most recent data shows that financial outflows from developing countries were 2.5 times the amount of aid flowing in,[83] with $3.3 trillion of the outflows as interest payments on foreign debt, foreign investment, repatriated income and capital flight, and an estimated 84 per cent of those net resource transfers being unrecorded capital flight, including illicit outflows (see S/2017/861).

95. Allocating a minimum of 15 per cent of all United Nations-managed funding in support of peacebuilding projects to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women was one of the benchmarks in the seven-point action plan for gender-responsive peacebuilding. Progress and capacity to track project funding remains highly uneven across entities. I have established an internal high-level task force on financing for gender equality, which will help to establish a baseline, more consistently monitor expenditure on gender equality internally and put forward ambitious targets for future allocations of resources. I call upon relevant United Nations entities to establish dedicated systems to measure progress and respond to stagnated or downward trends. I am encouraged that the idea of establishing minimum targets has been adopted by a growing number of leading stakeholders, including Canada. Demand for the expertise of UN-Women on gender and women and peace and security continues; its allocated budget for peace and security programming and humanitarian interventions remained at $71 million in 2017, similar to the preceding year.

96. For the period 2017–2019, the Peacebuilding Fund raised its target for gender-responsive peacebuilding investments from 15 to 30 per cent, after exceeding the minimum 15 per cent target in 2016. In 2017, the Fund reached 36 per cent by combining improved gender mainstreaming and targeted gender equality programming (see A/72/740). The Fund's gender and youth promotion initiatives allocated $27.5 million to gender-responsive and youth-inclusive peacebuilding projects in 13 countries, of which $16 million is earmarked for gender-responsive projects and $11 million for youth-inclusive projects. I reiterate my call to ensure adequate financial support to the Peacebuilding Fund, up to $500 million per year. With the new target of 30 per cent, a fully funded Peacebuilding Fund can be a major source of support to gender-responsive peacebuilding and sustaining peace. A positive trend was also reported by the global focal point for police, justice and corrections, with funds allocated to promote gender equality and women's rights in joint programming exceeding 15 per cent in the Central African Republic (16 per cent), Mali, Haiti, the State of Palestine (20 per cent) and Somalia (27 per cent).

97. I am concerned about signs of the shrinking space and funding for women-led civil society organizations, many of which operate on the front lines of conflict. In the period 2015–2016, bilateral aid to women's institutions and organizations in all

[81] For example, calls to move the money from war to gender equality and peace, using the hashtag #movethemoney.

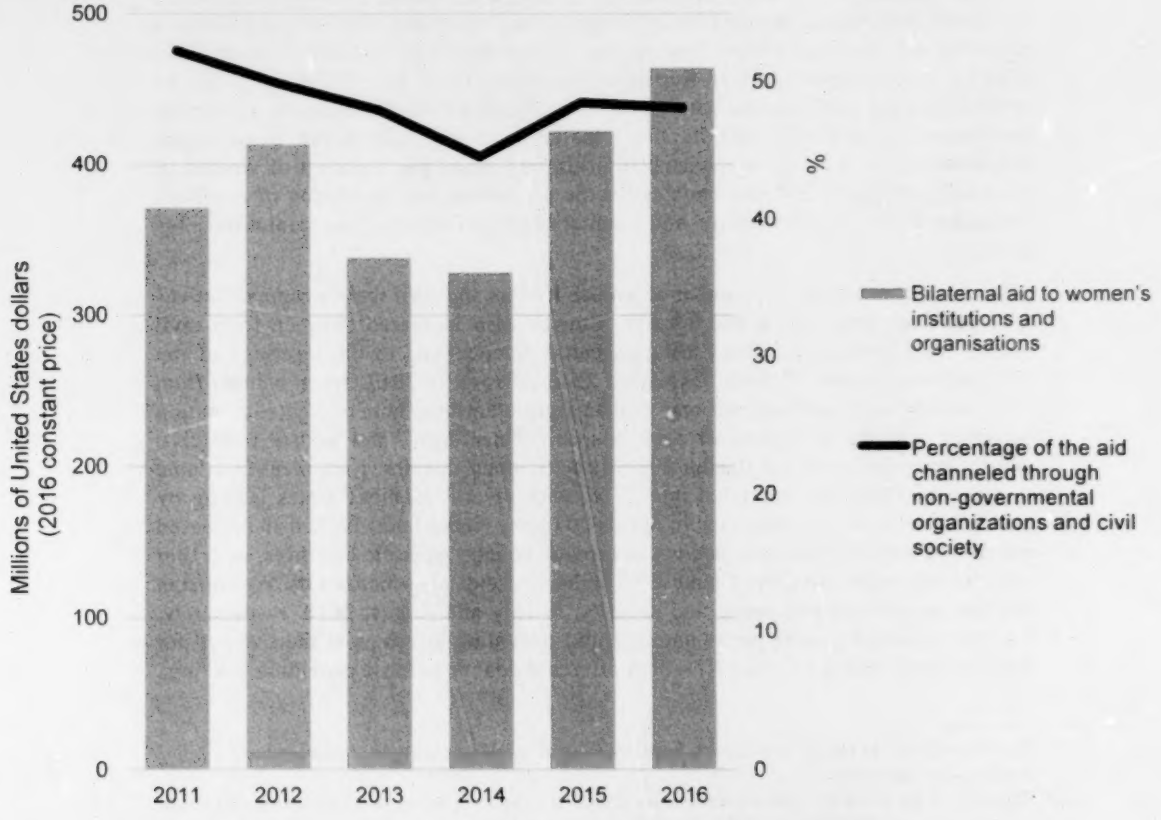
[82] See www.sipri.org/databases/milex.

[83] UN-Women, *Turning Promises*, p. 129.

developing countries was $464 million on average per year.[84] Trend analyses have indicated that the share of the aid channelled through women's non-governmental organizations has dropped, from 52.3 per cent in 2011, and stagnated below that level ever since, to 48.1 per cent in 2016.[85] I call upon donors to counter such trends and increase support for initiatives led by diverse women's governmental and non-governmental organizations, including women-led organizations for persons with disabilities. In particular, an increase in long-term core funding is required to ensure that women's organizations can carry out their work successfully and safely. Financial commitments must match the extent to which women's civil society organizations are relied upon to achieve collective agendas, including contributing to core policy and programming design and development.

Figure III

Bilateral aid to women's organizations and institutions and percentage of that aid channeled through non-governmental organizations and civil society, 2011–2016



98. The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund[86] is a unique mechanism, fully dedicated to supporting women's organizations in their peace and security efforts. To date, the Fund has been supporting over 40 civil society organizations in Burundi, Colombia, Jordan, Fiji, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. In 2018, with the support of donors, the Fund was able to initiate interventions in Iraq. The Fund has already contributed evidence and innovation to global efforts to prevent conflict. I

[84] OECD, "Aid to gender equality and women's empowerment: an overview", July 2018.

[85] OECD, "Creditor Reporting System" database.

[86] See http://wphfund.org/.

call upon Member States to increase their funding to the Fund and to help it to reach its target of $40 million by the end of 2020. Reaching the $40 million target would allow the Fund to support local and grass-roots civil society organizations in all 24 countries eligible for its assistance.

VII. Work of the Security Council

99. I am pleased to report progress across several areas of the work of the Security Council. In 2017, the Council increased the number of decisions[87] that contained one or more provisions on women and peace and security to 70.5 per cent of resolutions[88] and 88.8 per cent of presidential statements.[89] Importantly, decisions relating to country-specific or regional situations that contain one or more provisions on women and peace and security increased to 75.7 per cent,[90] from 51 per cent in 2016, with many resolutions containing stronger and more concrete language regarding leadership and participation of women. For example, on Iraq, the Security Council underscored the need for the equal participation of women in the upcoming elections, stabilization planning and local and national reconciliation (see Security Council resolution 2367 (2017)); on the Central African Republic (see resolution 2387 (2017)) and Mali (see resolution 2364 (2017)), mandate renewals included stronger provisions on women and peace and security; and its first resolution on the Lake Chad Basin urged Governments in the region to ensure the full and equal participation of women in national institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts, including in the security sector and counter-terrorism efforts (see resolution 2349 (2017)).

100. At the same time, the number of women leaders and civil society representatives who provided briefings to the Security Council also increased. Women from civil society who provide briefings bring essential perspectives to the meetings of the Council (see Security Council resolution 2242 (2015)). In 2017, seven women from civil society organizations and one woman from a national human rights institution provided briefings at region- or country-specific meetings;[91] and women from civil society provided briefings during three thematic open debates. I am pleased to note that progress has also extended into 2018, with several Member States leading by example during their presidency. In March 2018, the Netherlands invited an increased number of women from civil society to provide country-specific briefings, with four such women addressing the Council.[92] The Netherlands also focused its Afghanistan briefing on women and peace and security. In July and August 2018, respectively, Sweden achieved gender parity among those providing briefings to the Council for the first time[93] and the United Kingdom offered guidance to those providing briefings

[87] For the purposes of the present report, Security Council decisions include resolutions and presidential statements.

[88] Three of the 43 Security Council resolutions included references to sexual exploitation and abuse only (resolutions 2361 (2017), 2373 (2017) and 2394 (2017)).

[89] S/2017/861. See NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, "Mapping women, peace and security in the UN Security Council: 2016", 13 June 2017. Available from www.womenpeacesecurity.org/resource/mapping-women-peace-and-security-in-the-un-security-council-2016/.

[90] See https://unite.un.org/sites/unite.un.org/files/app-schighlights-2017/index.html.

[91] Afghanistan (S/PV.7896, S/PV.8147), Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/PV.7903), Lake Chad Basin (S/PV.7861, S/PV.8047), Somalia (S/PV.7873), South Sudan (S/PV.7906), Yemen (S/PV.7954).

[92] Generally, past presidencies have included one to two women from civil society among those providing briefings.

[93] Of the 20 people providing briefings to the Security Council in July, 11 were women and 9 were men.

on mainstreaming gender analysis into their interventions. I strongly encourage all members of the Security Council to ensure that women leaders and civil society representatives are included in all briefings and debates in the Council, and I thank the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for their continued support to Member States.

101. During 2017, the Security Council's Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security was chaired by Sweden and Uruguay, in close consultation with the United Kingdom, with UN-Women as the secretariat. The Informal Expert Group held focused meetings on Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Mali, Yemen and the Lake Chad Basin and helped to improve the quality of situation analysis through deeper analysis of women and peace and security concerns and priorities and to monitor progress. That included details on the extent of women's stark underrepresentation in multiple committees set up to implement peace agreements in Mali and the Central African Republic, as well as the noticeable absence of Afghan women in negotiations about upcoming peace talks. There were also more positive updates. Many of the recommendations highlighted in the first meeting on Afghanistan were addressed over the past two years, including repositioning the gender advisory expertise in the mission and revision of the Penal Code to include a definition of rape in line with international standards and the prohibition of the practice of *bacha bazi*. The capacity of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq was strengthened through the deployment of a senior women's protection advisor, and gender equality and the empowerment of women was identified as one of the mission's seven strategic priorities.

102. Across all countries on the agenda of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security and the agenda of the Security Council, much work remains. I encourage members of the Security Council to continue to make use of the information received and shared through the Informal Expert Group as a matter of practice, both in their statements and action in the Council and subsidiary bodies and through all other diplomatic channels, from human rights bodies to their embassies. I applaud the co-chairs of the Informal Expert Group for following up on those meetings and engaging with Governments, regional organizations and the United Nations. I extend my gratitude to the current co-chairs, Sweden and Peru, for consolidating and expanding the programme of work of the Informal Expert Group in 2018.

103. All outcome documents[94] of the five Security Council field missions undertaken during the reporting period also contained references to women and peace and security, either in written mission reports (see S/2017/403 (Lake Chad Basin) and S/2017/757 (Ethiopia)) or in briefings by mission leads or co-leads.[95] During the mission to the Lake Chad Basin in particular, several members of the Security Council raised the matter of the visibility of issues relating to women and peace and security with diverse stakeholders, many of which were also raised in the context of the previous month's meeting of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security. I encourage members of the Security Council to include provisions relating to women and peace and security in the terms of reference of Security Council field missions, which only two of five missions did in 2017 (see S/2017/181 and S/2017/871).

104. In 2018, joint high-level women and peace and security-focused missions inspired by the African Women Leaders Network continued their work (S/2017/861,

[94] For the purposes of the present report, outcome documents include written reports, verbal briefings and presidential statements.

[95] See S/PV.7894 (Lake Chad Basin), S/PV.7941 (Colombia), S/PV.7994 (Haiti) and S/PV.8077 (Sahel).

para. 7). In July 2018, the Deputy Secretary-General and the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Women, Peace and Security undertook a mission to Chad, South Sudan and the Niger. At various points during the visit, they were joined by other United Nations leaders and the President of the Security Council in July (Sweden). Through such broad representation and expertise, the mission addressed issues related to the leadership of women, sexual and gender-based violence, preventing radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism, and peace and climate security. As in 2017, the Security Council was provided with a briefing on the outcome of the mission.[96]

105. In 2017, 84 per cent of my reports to the Security Council contained references to women and peace and security, including 16 of 20 reports on country and regional situations, all 25 periodic reports on special political missions and 36 of 41 periodic reports on peacekeeping operations.[97] I expect my Special Representatives to ensure that gender-responsive conflict and peace analysis is included in all reporting to the Security Council and I encourage members of the Security Council to address specific questions on women and peace and security to field leadership during consultations.

106. The full potential of mainstreaming women and peace and security considerations within sanctions regimes has yet to be realized. The number of sanctions regimes containing conflict-related sexual violence and/or gender-based violence as part of their designation criteria increased to seven in 2017. Notably, the newly established sanctions regime for Mali included an explicit reference to sexual and gender-based violence, and the sanctions regime for the Central African Republic was amended to provide for sexual violence as a separate designation criterion. The Security Council also expressed its readiness to sanction individuals and entities who are supporting ISIL, Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and commit trafficking in persons, the sale of women and girls, or forced marriage (see Security Council resolution 2388 (2017)). In 2017, the Security Council Affairs Division, in cooperation with the Gender, Peace and Security Unit of the Department of Political Affairs, introduced a dedicated women and peace and security training for all expert panels. In the past, even when included in the mandate of the committee and publicly reported on by the panel of experts, very few individuals or entities were sanctioned for sexual violence, trafficking in persons, gender-related persecution, targeted abductions, killings of women and girls, or gross violations of women's human rights.

VIII. Concluding observations and recommendations

107. As I submit the present yearly report on women and peace and security, I am cognizant that such reports often cannot capture the scope and scale of global human rights violations or the short- and long-term impacts of conflict and crises. They also fail to convey the individual stories, fears and tragedies behind the numbers or to give proper recognition to the leadership, vison and activism demonstrated by many women in the most difficult of situations. Every year commitments to promote the role of women in peace and security are not sufficiently backed with the requisite financial and political support. This year is no different.

108. We face a true test of our commitments in the lead up to 2020. Therefore, in cooperation with Member States, I intend to continue realigning our efforts towards the full implementation of women and peace and security commitments. Progress in

[96] See S/PV.8306.

[97] See NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, "Mapping women, peace and security".

this area is inextricably linked and essential to our global efforts to prevent conflict, sustain peace and fulfil our goal to leave no one behind.

109. Practical and institutional barriers continue to prevent women from participating fully and substantively in all peace processes. In that regard, I call upon Member States and regional organizations to address those barriers by adopting concrete measures that are responsive to the needs of women participants. I ask Member States that make positive commitments to this agenda in the Security Council to link those commitments to positive actions in the peace processes that they support.

110. Efforts of Member States could further advance the women and peace and security agenda by championing it in all forums and supporting a stronger United Nations gender architecture thorough assessed budgets for posts dedicated to building gender advisory capacity.

111. I welcome the contributions by the Security Council Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security and encourage the Council to bring forward the information gathered by the Informal Expert Group into its deliberations and outcomes, demonstrating the true impact of high-quality gender conflict analysis.

112. To document our collective achievements and identify gaps in the implementation of their commitments on women and peace and security, I encourage Member States to initiate national and regional review processes in the lead up to the 20-year anniversary, in 2020, of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

113. In the context of United Nations peace operations, I will continue to work with my senior managers to improve gender parity. My temporarily established working group on emergency measures for the implementation of gender parity in peace operations has already taken forward bold measures to ensure real change and will play a catalytic role in the efforts of the Organization to achieve gender parity and geographical diversity in peace operations.

114. My Envoys and Special Representatives, with support from my High-level Advisory Board on Mediation as appropriate, will identify ways to advance the effective participation of women in United Nations-supported peace processes. They will strive to integrate gender equality and gender parity in all aspects of their work and ensure the inclusion of dedicated gender expertise in their teams.

115. All entities in the United Nations system with reporting requirements on women and peace and security will be expected to develop gender-sensitive conflict analysis guidelines and mechanisms by 2020. In the same vein, I will continue to ensure that a gender-sensitive perspective informs my statements, reports and briefings, including those to the Security Council.

116. I call upon all relevant United Nations operational entities to track targeted and mainstreamed budgetary allocations and expenditures related to women and peace and security. Those data will serve to indicate progress achieved towards reaching or exceeding the minimum 15 per cent target for programmes that further gender equality and the empowerment of women in peacebuilding contexts ahead of 2020 and will inform my annual reports on women and peace and security.

117. I reiterate my intention to review and update the seven-point action plan on gender-responsive peacebuilding that was set out in 2010, for agreement by the United Nations system in 2020. It will be led by UN-Women and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, in close coordination with members of the Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security. I encourage UN-Women to begin a consultative process on improving collection of data and measurements to monitor trends and progress globally. Those efforts should consider new data initiatives

specific to women and peace and security and efforts to populate and disaggregate data across the Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

118. In conclusion, I intend to include in my next report on women and peace and security an assessment of implementation of the recommendations related to women and peace and security relevant to the United Nations system drawn from the three peace and security reviews undertaken in 2015. The findings and recommendations from the exercise will provide the basis for more concrete action in the 12 months leading up to the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).